

Socioeconomic and Cultural Context of the Northwest Lowlands

The socioeconomic and cultural context of a region must be considered in any planning process. While this plan focuses on the resource and recreation management of the properties, underlying socioeconomic status and cultural contexts are important in understanding the needs of the public when planning for properties in the Northwest Lowlands. Due to the method by which economic and cultural data is collected and made available, the context given here is for the Douglas county in which most of the Northwest Lowlands falls.

Socioeconomic Context

Population, Income, and Housing

As of the 2010 U.S. Census, the population of Douglas County was 43,721 at a density of 32 people per square mile. This makes up 0.8% of the state's population and is lower than the average population density statewide; which is 105 persons per square mile. This includes the City of Superior, which is not in the Northwest Lowlands. Per capita income is \$26,396.

Economic Sectors

Government, tourism, health care, social services and retail are the largest sectors of employment within the counties of the Northwest Lowlands.

Land Use and Ownership

The federally-owned St. Croix National Scenic Riverway is part of the Northwest Lowlands. Several large DNR properties including Governor Knowles State Forest and Pattison State Park fall partially within the Northwest Lowlands. Neither is part of this planning process. Douglas County forest makes up a large part of this ecological landscape.

Cultural Context

The department's properties in the Northwest Lowlands are within the ceded territory of the Ojibwe Tribes. Native American tribes are independent, sovereign nations, as they were prior to the arrival of Europeans in North America. The Ojibwe Tribes ceded some lands in the northern one-third of Wisconsin to the United States Government in the Treaties of 1837 and 1842. In those treaties, they reserved their rights to hunt, trap, fish and gather within various publicly-owned lands. Treaty rights are currently being exercised and implemented.

